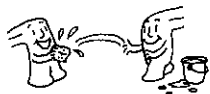


Reading Connection

Working Together for Learning Success

May 2014

Bennet Academy
Joseph Chella, Principal



Book Picks

■ *Ramona Quimby, Age 8*

Ramona
faces new

challenges as she enters third grade. If starting a new school isn't enough, there's also the eraser-stealing bully, an egg that's supposed to be boiled (but isn't), and her best friend's difficult little sister. Part of the Ramona series by Beverly Cleary. (Also available in Spanish.)



■ *Music: Investigate the Evolution of American Sound*

How have history and technology influenced music? Author Donna Latham explores the history of music in America, from patriotic tunes and folk songs to hip-hop and rock 'n' roll.

This nonfiction book also gets into the science of sound—and encourages readers to make their own music.



■ *Locomotion*

Jacqueline Woodson's novel is written as a series of poems by 11-year-old Lonnie Motion (nicknamed "Locomotion"), who lost his parents in a fire. Inspired by a school writing assignment, Lonnie finds poetry a good way to express his feelings and cope with the changes in his life.

■ *How to Speak Dog; How to Speak Cat*

Can your children tell what their dogs or cats are thinking? Sarah Whitehead's nonfiction books will help them understand tail-wagging, purrs, and other behaviors. Also includes games to play with pets, training tips, and pet care facts.



A summer full of books

"I'm going to read that book next!"

If your child has a list of books she wants to try, she's more likely to read regularly this summer. Suggest these ideas to help her find books that appeal to her, and then she can check them out or reserve them at the library.

Armchair travels

Your youngster may not tour the canals of Venice or go to an Antarctic research station—but she could read her way through those places! Encourage her to choose books about places she has studied in school or wants to visit. She might read a novel set in Italy or a nonfiction book about the South Pole, for example. She'll learn about places, people, and events around the world.

Book trailers

Help your child search the Internet for book trailers—they're like movie trailers, but for books. She can get a taste of what a book is about and decide whether to



put it on her to-read list. She'll find a variety of trailers at scholastic.com/kids/stacks/videos or slimekids.com.

Showtime

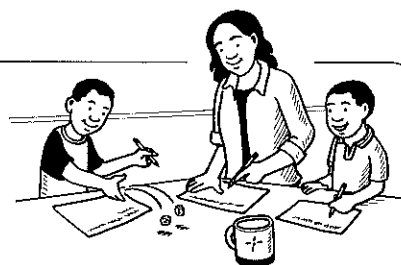
Let your youngster look for movies and local performances (plays, ballets) based on books. She can pick ones she'd like to attend and add the book titles to her summer reading list. After she reads the book and sees the show, have her tell you how the two versions were similar and different. ■

Family writing fun

Play writing games as a family, and you'll encourage your youngster to see writing as fun—and to choose his words carefully when he writes.

Roll and write. Your child picks a household object (say, a mug) and rolls two dice. Then, everyone writes a sentence about the item—with the same number of words as the number he rolled. *Example:* Roll an 8 and write, "The big yellow mug is smooth and round." Read your sentences aloud, select another object, and roll again.

Make a word chain. Ask your youngster to choose a random word (*gelato*). The next person says the first word that comes to mind (*cone*) and so on until you have said 10 words. Each family member writes a sentence that includes the first and the last words in your chain. What kinds of sentences did you come up with? ■



Whose point of view?

A story can certainly change depending on who's telling it. Let your child see that firsthand as he explores point of view in his writing. Try these strategies:

- Have him write about a family outing from different people's viewpoints. For each narrator, he should think about how that person's experiences and personality would shape the story. For example, how might his baby



sister describe her first picnic? ("Mommy is always telling me not to throw food on the floor, but today we actually ate on the ground!") His dad may have seen it differently. ("Our picnic was nice, but the softball game afterward was the best part.")

- When your youngster works on a story for school, suggest that he experiment with point of view. He could write a paragraph through one character's eyes and then rewrite it from the perspective of another character. Then, he can pick the one he likes best and write the rest of the story. ■

Fun with Words

Wet and wild words

With this twist on Hot Potato, your child can cool off outside as she learns about parts of speech.

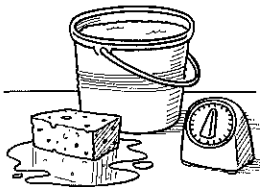
Materials: timer, bucket of water, sponge

Have players stand in a circle. Let your youngster soak the sponge in the bucket, name a part of speech

(noun, verb, adjective, pronoun, or adverb), and set the timer for two minutes.

Your child shouts out a word that fits the category she chose and tosses the sponge to the player on her left. If she picked verbs, she might say, "Hop!" The next player says another verb ("Fly!"), and tosses the sponge to the next player. *Note:* If you get the part of speech wrong, hold the sponge, and try again.

Continue around the circle—the person holding the sponge when the buzzer rings is out. The next person picks a different part of speech, and a new round begins. The last player left wins. ■



Q&A

Reading, reading everywhere

Q We're looking forward to day trips and visits with relatives this summer. My daughter will pack books, but are there other ways to fit in reading?

A Day trips and family visits offer plenty of opportunities for reading practice. At a zoo or an aquarium, for example, your child can read signs to learn about animals' diets and behavior. Stop by a visitors center, and encourage her to pick up flyers or brochures. She may find out about new attractions for your family to try.

At a relative's home, your daughter can ask to browse bookshelves or magazine stacks. She may find something different to read—and she'll learn about your family by discovering what they enjoy reading. And here's an idea: She could read their cookbooks or family recipes and then help with the cooking! ■

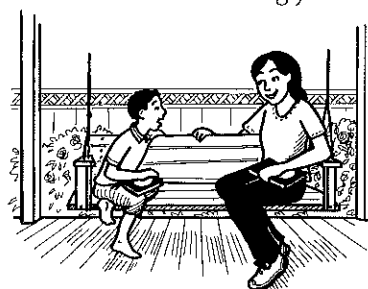


Talking about books

Many books written for children are enjoyable for adults, too. Try reading the same book your youngster is reading, and use these tips to discuss it. Your child will build reading comprehension—and he'll be glad to have you for a reading pal!

1. Share a memory.

What did the book make you think of? Perhaps the main character reminded your youngster of a friend, or maybe the setting is similar to a place you used to live.



2. Discuss the author. Did you and your child like the writing style? Read the "About the Author" page, and talk about how the writer's life may have influenced the book.

3. Invent your own ending. Take turns sharing your ideas for a different ending to the book.

Idea: Find a "reader's guide" to the book in the library or online—the questions can be a good place for starting your conversation. ■

OUR PURPOSE

To provide busy parents with practical ways to promote their children's reading, writing, and language skills.

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